CHRIST IN HADES

BY

STEPHEN PHILLIPS

ILLUSTRATED BY STELLA LANGDALE

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Frontispiece

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HRIST IN HADES

BY STEPHEN PHILLIPS

ILLUSTRATED BY STELLA LANGDALE WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY C. LEWIS HIND

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Frontispiece

"Come, my Hermes, Come! 'Tis time to fetch me" *Facing page* 71

"Who used to run along a sunny gust" . . „ „ 72

"It is the time of tender, opening things" . . „ „ 74

"Over the head of Jesus the whole sky Of pain began to drive" . . . . . „ „ 76

"In silence stood the Dead Gazing, only was heard that River steal The listless ripple of Oblivion" „ „ 77

"Not happier than these melancholy kings?" . „ „ 78

"As out of some great battle" . . . „ „ 80

"Dreadful suspended business, and vast life Pausing, dismantled piers, and naked frames. And further, shapes from obscure troubles loosed, Like mist descended" . . . . . „ „ 82

"To see these nations burning run through Hell. Magnificently anguished, by the grave Untired; and this last March against the Powers" . „ „ 86

"The storm carried his voice and Veiled with rushing hail his face" . . . . „ „ 90

"Before them hung Still unredeemed Prometheus from his crag" . . . . „ „ 91

"Half in the shining sun upright, and half Reposing in the shadow" . . . . „ „ 94

"Then to despair slowly dispersed, as men Return with morning to the accustomed task . . „ „ 96

"The vault closed back" . . . . „ „ 97

INTRODUCTION

RELATING SOME LITERARY EPISODES OF THE NINETIES, WHICH CULMINATED IN THE "CROWNING," BY "THE ACADEMY," OF "CHRIST IN HADES"

BY

C. LEWIS HIND

Formerly Editor of "The Academy"

BEFORE me are two neat, slim books, green in colour and gilt-tooled. The legend on the title pages is virtually the same—"Poems" by Stephen Phillips. Each volume contains eighteen poems, including "Marpessa" and "Christ in Hades." The latter poem was first issued in April 1896 by Mr. Elkin Mathews, No. 3, in his Shilling Garland Series.

The imprint of "Poems" by Stephen Phillips is John Lane: The Bodley Head; but the dates of the two volumes are different. One, the first edition, was issued in 1897, and was immediately sold out: the second edition was published in January 1898.

The cover of the 1897 volume bears a geometrical,

decorative stamp ; on the cover of the other is a laurel wreath. This small but significant change, a laurel-wreath instead of a geometrical design—testimony to Mr. John Lane's sensitive alertness in publishing—denotes an interesting episode of literary history, the curtain of which I have been invited to lift. I could tell it all, and more, from memory, without opening a book.

But first I must quote a statement from a distant issue of " The Academy," of which at that time I was editor. The date is January 15th, 1898 : the statement (it seemed momentous then : it has a thrill even after the lapse of nearly nineteen years) was this :

" *In accordance with our intention to crown two books of signal merit published in* 1897, *we have made the following awards :*

One Hundred Guineas to Mr. Stephen Phillips, for his volume of Poems. Fifty Guineas to Mr. William Ernest Henley, for his Essay on the Life, Genius, and Achievement of Burns, contained in the fourth volume of the Centenary Edition of the Poetry of Robert Burns."

That statement is the text of this chronicle essay which introduces a reprint of " Christ in Hades," with understanding illustrations by Miss Stella Langdale. They show real imaginative power, and every reader must

regret that the poet did not live to see this child of his brain and heart interpreted by an artist whose vision fuses with her technique. Re-reading " Christ in Hades " and that statement in " The Academy," I desire, after the manner of garrulous chroniclers, even at the risk of seeming egotistical, to investigate memory and explain how it was that we of " The Academy," youngish and lean-pursed men, dared to expend one hundred and fifty guineas in crowning two books of signal merit of the year 1897.

The eighteen-nineties in literature, art and journalism have already had their historians—Mrs. Pennell's " Nights," Mr. Holbrook Jackson's " The Eighteen-Nineties," Katharine Tynan Hinkson's " The Middle Years," to name but three. Also Max Beerbohm, whose nineties story in " The Cornhill " for last June called " Enoch Soames " was one of the most delightful things he has ever written. Life capered in the nineties. I suppose we were used to being *fin de siècle*, and waved our flags to show that we were not scared.

Perhaps I, following these historians, knowing them, and having been fervent and happy in that bustling decade, may as well begin with the year 1890 when I first met that great personality, great influence, and great friend—William Ernest Henley. Poet, man of letters, editor, he was the protagonist of the nineties,

and the literary father, kind but firm, of many of the young lions ; but he was always the noblest roarer.

In 1890 I was sub-editor of " The Art Journal," having in 1887 relinquished lace, the old family business, for the pen. I had joined " The Art Journal " staff in the unpremeditated way, *sans* plan, *sans* ceremony, that it has always been my good fortune to follow. John Latey, then editor of " The Illustrated London News " (his son, John Latey, Junr., followed him as editor), an old friend of my father's, had given me, while I was still in my father's business, little things to do for " The News." One day I said to him casually, " I want to leave the city. I want to write." It was instinct, such as a cat has for valerian, for there was absolutely nothing that I really wanted to write about. Greater psychological knowledge tells me now that I really wanted to Enjoy and Experience, and that I postulated writing as the right road. But I began wisely. " The Daily News " in those days liked romantic business articles on such subjects as parchment, jet, bananas. I sent them an article on lace. They printed it and paid me handsomely—my first literary earnings. It was wise to send them the article on lace, not the one-act tragedy called " The Unpardonable Sin," which I also had in stock. John Latey, when I told him that I desired to leave the city and " go in for writing," laughed in his beard and uttered

in his courteous, old-fashioned manner well chosen words which meant " Don't be a fool." However, in less than two days he sent me a note saying that the sub-editorship of " The Art Journal " was vacant. He gave me a letter to Lionel Robinson, who in turn presented me with one to the editor of " The Art Journal." I admit that I had to hustle, and make the best of my poor credentials; but the end was that in July 1887 I left Watling Street at two p.m. on a Saturday and entered " The Art Journal " office at nine a.m. on the following Monday.

My chief was Mr. Marcus B. Huish, a well-known figure and author in the art world, and one of the early collectors of Japanese *objets d'art.* Came a day when he informed me that a consulting editor, W. E. Henley, had been appointed, and one noon, a memorable noon for me, a big, burly lame man with a shock of red hair, a tangle of red beard, and quizzical blue eyes, came stumping into our weekly committee assembly. Imagine a Viking suddenly blown by a storm into a Dorcas meeting, and you may visualise the advent of W. E. H. into the precise and venerable " Art Journal " parlour which was still slightly stifled by the aura of that notable nonentity, S. C. Hall.

Henley's laugh fogged the S. C. Hall aura, his big outlook on life confused our grave faces, and his knowledge of French art opened for me the gate to Corot, Rousseau

and Daumier. His personality pervaded those Tuesday assemblies; he incited us into actuality, and injected joy into our solemn conclaves. S. C. Hall's aura went like the smoke of a spent match. To Henley I owe my real awakening to art and literature, and the injunction that, whatever the reward, the best is worth doing for its own sake. One night comes back to me. He had asked me down to Chiswick. "Some men are coming," he said, as he stumped out of the "Art Journal" office—and my heart glowed. Many men were gathered in the cheerful room at Chiswick, whose names I had long venerated, and of all the splendid talk I heard that night, the most splendid was a duel, poetry the subject, between Henley and Oscar Wilde. It was broad-sword against rapier, and I knew not which won: the give and take, the hammer and dart were too dazzling. I suppose Wilde won, because a time came when Henley ceased, and Wilde delivered a melodious monologue on Shelley, one of the most beautiful excursions into appreciative criticism that I have ever heard or read. The dark, dire days came and Oscar Wilde was drowned in his own poisoned shallows. I shut out those latter years and think only of his tender and loving understanding of the most ethereal of poets. How strange it will be if, when we awake from the dream of death, we find that we are judged only by the good we have done.

Henley, " dear and great friend," as Rodin called him, remained my friend to the end. The red hair turned white, the labouring limbs grew frailer, but the big heart, and the dauntless spirit of the author of—

> " What have I done for you,
> England, my England ?
> What is there I would not do,
> England, my own ? "

were never vanquished. He was warrior and influence to the last. W. E. H. can never be replaced.

"The Art Journal," as representing the older traditions, was still a force, but a newer art was beginning to awaken. The Chantrey Trustees had become almost popular among *les jeunes* through buying Sargent's " Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose," and the knowing were beginning to talk knowingly about the Newlyn School, although elderly Professors of Art hinted that it was not quite nice for young men to treat Light so familiarly, as if it really existed. It was Mrs. Meynell, in a series of sympathetic and subtle articles in "The Art Journal," who gave the Newlyn School its imprimatur. Art was upon the town and stepped out boldly. I, being young and bold, wrote to the editor of " The Globe " suggesting that I should interview the members of the Royal Academy. He, supposing, I imagine, that I was a person

of importance on "The Art Journal," consented. The Royal Academicians did not desire to see me, and I dreaded seeing them; but all went merrily. Burne-Jones, I remember, apologised, with a twinkle in his eye, for not asking me to stay to luncheon because his meal was a hunk of bread and cheese strewn over a bench; Sir John Millais (it was Sunday morning; he was playing patience, and he made me promise that I would not tell) made a sketch for me to illustrate the difference between a seal and a sea-lion (I forgot why); and Sir Frederic Leighton mistaking me for a Spaniard, who was also awaiting an audience, addressed me in the language of Castile. These interviews must have been successful, as the editor of "The Globe" acceded to my second request to write a weekly column under the heading "Art and Artists," the first of the go-as-you-please columns which became a feature of the evening press in the nineties. Editorially I was able to offer an early commission, if not his first, to my old friend Pett Ridge, an article on the poetical side of Paris (I did not know that he was a humorist then, except in conversation) for "The Art Journal" Paris Exhibition number. Pett Ridge and I also collaborated (he did most of the work) in digging out Andrew Lang leaders from back files of "The Daily News." Andrew Lang was our idol. A leader by him was sunshine to my morning. The book

was published under the title " Lost Leaders," and some silly reviewers said they couldn't be lost because we had found them. Richard Whiteing, who came into his kingdom later with " No. 5 John Street," was also writing delightful anonymous leading articles for " The Daily News." Often it required a keen sense to distinguish a Lang from a Whiteing.

It was very easy to make a living by the pen in those days. There was " Tit Bits," the advance guard of democratic popular journalism, and I found that I had the knack of writing about anything I met in the way of adventure, such as descending a Cornish tin mine, ascending in a captive balloon, or spending an hour in an actor's dressing room during the performance. And there was always an extra guinea when your article was chosen for the contents bill.

Not long afterwards " Answers " broke into the new journalism, and Alfred Harmsworth quickly became our romantic figure, eclipsing Stead, who was galvanising the old " Pall Mall Gazette " into life. It was Arthur Pearson, not Alfred Harmsworth, who began his career by winning the " Tit Bits " General Information Prize. Alfred Harmsworth (Lord Northcliffe) was then writing for Henderson's publications, of which the best known was " The Young Folks Budget." Henderson kept open table at one o'clock each day, and

among the " writing folk " on his staff were Robert Louis Stevenson and Alfred Harmsworth. Stevenson's " Treasure Island " was first published in " The Young Folks Budget." Stevenson had called it " The Sea Cock." Henderson persuaded him to change the title to " Treasure Island." Later Alfred Harmsworth edited " Youth " for Sir William Ingram, and so on, step by step, to the new " Evening News " in 1894, and the newer " Daily Mail " in 1896. The nineties " new journalism " then began to swing freely and to bump heavily against the old. Writers were glad. Their markets widened every month.

Journalism was bustling and successful in the nineties. I was making easily a much larger income than I had received in the city. Open to every ambitious young writer was " The St. James's Gazette," best of evening journals, under the able editorship of Sidney Low, where Barrie rose at a bound into recognition, and where Pett Ridge first published his humorous dialogues. In later years " The St. James's Gazette " had a bewildering number of editors who followed one another in quick succession. One summer I had to take a Salisbury diet rest cure. It was not for overworked nerves as I pretended; the trouble was really due to the number of dinners I attended to welcome new editors of " The St. James's Gazette." It was not difficult to have a " Globe "

turnover accepted, but it was hard to get an article into "The St. James's," and still harder to creep into the columns of "The Scots Observer" (later "The National Observer") where Henley reigned supported by Charles Whibley. I had articles accepted, but—they went in, mine: they came out, Henley's. I am quite prepared to admit they were ten times better, but—. Even an article that Henley returned would be minutely corrected. I have one still, the W. E. H. tiny, cramped handwriting meandering emendations between every line.

Then there were stories. I wrote several for "Belgravia," published by Chatto and Windus, and one of them was noticed by "The Spectator" (I can quote it now because I knew the criticism by heart the moment my astonished eyes fell upon it)—"'Parson Sal' (said "The Spectator") "deserves to be singled out from the crowd of stories in the current 'Belgravia,' not for the plot, which is commonplace enough, but for a distinct although undisciplined power of characterisation it exhibits. The name of the writer, C. Lewis Hind, is new to us."

Had I been Arnold Bennett, I suppose I should have exploited fiction and played my "power of characterisation" for all it was worth, but I took the line of lesser resistance—editing, and writing articles which invited my eyes every walk I took. And such stories as I wrote later, "The Academy of Intentions" for "The Art

Journal" ; "The Duke Who Came Into His Kingdom" for "The Pall Mall Budget," and "The Enchanted Stone" (a chapter from a novel published later by Messrs. A. and C. Black) for "The Yellow Book," etc., were really written to amuse myself, not because I thought I could write fiction. Towards the end of 1892 I began scheming out a new art magazine. That meant seeing people, and bustling around. Action was life. Fiction was reflective ; I wanted to do, not to reflect.

I left "The Art Journal" in 1893 to become the first editor of "The Studio." Unknown to me, Mr. John Lane, while I was planning my new art magazine, had been spending week ends with Mr. Charles Holme at The Red House, Bexley Heath, also engaged in planning a new art magazine. When at the old Hogarth Club, which I had joined, I told John Lane of my scheme (it has always been my way to babble my plans to sympathetic souls) that slow knowing smile spread over his face, which always means that he has something nice up his sleeve. "I must bring you and Charles Holme together," he said. "Holme wants an editor."

John Lane and I first met at the house of our friends Mr. and Mrs. Graham R. Tomson in St. John's Wood. There, on Sunday afternoons, I met many others whom it has been a privilege to know, including William Watson, a poet who has held his trust sacred, and who

has shown that one can be classical and human at the same time. As I write, his latest volume "Pencraft" lies before me—classical and human. To the Tomsons I journeyed often with the dear friend of those early days, gone too soon, Vernon Blackburn. Under the inspiration of "Graham R. Tomson's" dark eyes and winning manner I heard Oscar Wilde make one of his best impromptus. It was the time of the Japanese fan craze, and Madame was engaged in decorating the wall of the drawing-room with them. Oscar was announced. "Oh, Mr. Wilde," she said, "you are just in time to help me arrange these fans." "Madame," he replied, his vast smile broadening, "they should not be arranged; they should occur." There I heard Harold Frederic perform, with astonishing success, the feat of singing folk-songs and eating bread and butter at the same moment; there I actually saw my idol, Andrew Lang, write the best part of an article, standing, or rather lolling against the window sash, chattering languidly as he wrote, the paper, when it suited him, resting on the window-pane; there brilliant and unfortunate Lady Colin Campbell electrified us by her singing of "The Wearin' o' the Green." There I met my friend Clement K. Shorter, who had lately followed John Latey, Jun., as editor of "The Illustrated London News." It was in an article by Shorter that I first saw public reference

to another of our idols—greater than "Andrew of the Brindled Hair"—Robert Louis Stevenson. I never saw R. L. S. Wilfrid Meynell told me that he had met him at the Savile Club, a fantastic sprite, who balanced himself on the arm of a chair, and made witty nonsense verses as fast as his tongue could utter them. Clement Shorter's eulogy of the author of "Travels with a Donkey" had been published in "The Star," the dazzling bomb that T. P. O'Connor had just launched into journalism. Bernard Shaw did the music, Walkley the drama, and Shorter the literary column. "The Star" was what we were beginning to call "alive." One afternoon, when things were very quiet, it appeared with this poster, in enormous letters—"Nothing Of Importance To-Day."

I never pass "Graham R. Tomson's" garden in St. John's Wood, now so changed, without thinking of a love-song she wrote. One stanza runs :

> "The dim grass stirs with your footstep,
> The blue dusk throbs with your smile.
> I and the world of glory
> Are one for a little while."

During the early weeks of work on "The Studio" a delightful venture (so venturesome after "The Art Journal") I was able to introduce the drawings of Aubrey

Beardsley to Mr. Charles Holme, the proprietor, and to suggest that Joseph Pennell should write the article.

It was one Sunday afternoon, at the house in Palace Court of my life-long friends, Alice and Wilfrid Meynell, that I first met Aubrey Beardsley. He was then a clerk in an insurance office. Aymer Vallance had brought him to call upon Mrs. Meynell, and Beardsley, watchful but composed, modest, but quite cognisant of his uncanny power, hatchet featured, with hair cut in a fringe like Phil May's, backed by Vallance's enthusiasm, suggested that he should show me his drawings. They were in a black portfolio tucked under his arm, that wonderful early series, his highest achievement. I turned them over, conscious of considerable inward excitement, and said to myself, " This looks like genius."

I requisitioned them for " The Studio." It was just the gilt-edged novelty that our new art magazine wanted; but when they appeared in the first number, dated April 1893, I was no longer editor of " The Studio."

It happened thus: Mr. Charles Holme and I were deep in preparations for the initial issue, planning and re-planning the contents in a ground floor in Henrietta Street, Strand, when H. B. Marriott Watson (we were living in the same house: he had already written those splendidly imaginative articles in " The Scots Observer " since published under the title " Diogenes in London ")

whispered to me one evening that something surprising was imminent in journalism: that someone, whose identity was a secret, had purchased "The Pall Mall Gazette" and "The Pall Mall Budget," and was about to found a magazine. Not until many weeks later, when the staff had crowded into the old offices in Northumberland Street, did we learn that this fairy godfather (the whole thing now, in sedate recollection, is irradiant like a fairy tale) was The Hon. William Waldorf Astor (Lord Astor of Hever).

It happened in the swift, unpremeditated way in which things happened in the nineties. Without preamble, I received a curt note asking me to call upon Mr. H. C. Cust at Lord Brownlow's house in Carlton House Terrace. Harry Cust, that prince of editors, and most stimulating of Chiefs, who made "The Pall Mall Gazette" the brightest and bravest of evening journals, having first delivered himself of a few witty remarks, which I attempted to understand, and to increase, asked me to edit "The Pall Mall Budget." His enthusiasm, the princeliness of the offer, and the vista of possibilities unfolded, captured me. I returned to Mr. Holme and explained matters; he generously consented to release me from my agreement. Then he said rather dolorously, "But whom shall I get to edit 'The Studio'?" "Try Gleeson White," I cried, on the spur of the moment (in

the nineties we always acted on the spur of the moment). "You try," said Mr. Holme.

I walked round to Messrs. Bell and Son's offices near by, found Gleeson White in his den, surrounded by a zareba of books, and popped the question to him. He was charmed. He suggested that it was the chance of his life. There was no time to be astonished at the prompt transference of an editorship. We were too gaily busy to be astonished in the nineties, and even, if I had been capable of astonishment, those delirious and delightful three years in "The Pall Mall" office would have cured me.

I conveyed Aubrey Beardsley with me to "The Pall Mall Budget" and he at once began to caper through its pages. His work depressed the manager, and I am afraid did not wholly please Mr. Astor, but he was a sympathetic proprietor: we liked him even if we were a little fearful of his pungent criticism; but he allowed us our heads. Beardsley did some wonderful theatrical drawings; and he made a few failures, because there was a radium streak of Puck in his genius. One day I commissioned him to make drawings from the plaster designs for the new coinage. He did them with spirit, but he made them comic. Beardsley was of course more at home (indeed, there he was entirely at home) in "The Yellow Book," of which the first number was published in April 1894.

"The Fire" and "The Question" by Stephen Phillips saw the light in that most original of magazines, so expressive of the nineties: there too John Davidson's "Ballad of a Nun" was first published in October 1894, and while London was talking about it and quoting it, Owen Seaman came out with his "Ballad of a Bun," which, I remember, made me quite happy for a week end. Owen Seaman having parodied so brilliantly one of the Bodley Head poets, to the great delight of his innumerable readers, was further inspired to exploit more of the Vigo Street poets, including William Watson, Richard Le Gallienne, etc., and that with such neat and nimble wit that John Lane was the object of general sympathy from all his friends, on account of this blow at the Bodley Head. But just at that time, with his usual luck, it happened that he met the mordant parodist at Professor Charles Waldstein's, in Cambridge, when, to the surprise of Mr. Seaman, John Lane congratulated him on his witty parodies and at once arranged to publish them. Thus he adroitly extracted any possible sting. Under the title of "The Battle of the Bays" they have since become a classic.

One afternoon in 1897, in the Bodley Head Parlour, I met a tall, fair youth of distinguished appearance, who wore his clothes with such an air that I had to know him. It was W. J. Locke, who had just published "Derelicts."

Behind all these growing reputations of the nineties, uniting and vivifying all his contributors, was that bright and restless spirit, Henry Harland, the literary editor of "The Yellow Book." Already doomed, living on gallons of milk and one lung, he had the energy of six men, and it is pleasant to recall that before he faded away, the fire blazing when the fuel was gone, burning on itself, he tasted success with his joyous romance, essential Harland, called "The Cardinal's Snuff Box."

The three years on "The Pall Mall Budget" deserve a book to themselves: this is not the place. But I must say a few words. Sir Kinlock Cooke (elevated since) was then assistant-editor of the "Gazette," followed later by Ivan Müller, a fund of knowledge and jollity. Mr. Justice Darling (since elevated) came in occasionally to write political leaders. He sat sometimes in my room, and I used to wait for him to make a joke. Lord Frederick Hamilton was editor of the "Magazine." Once only, it was said, was he cross. That memorable day, when the "Gazette" had the exclusive news of Gladstone's retirement, Cust ordered all the doors to be locked while the paper was being published, so that the news should not leak out. Lord Frederick could not proceed to his luncheon, and "the faithful Moody" (the P.M.G.), perennial hall-porter, had to explain.

It was something to publish in "The Pall Mall Budget"

Kipling's " Jungle Book " stories. How well I remember reading them one evening in an inn on the Thames till long past midnight, and my reverential joy in studying Kipling's corrections of the typewritten manuscript. It was something to slip once a week ten golden sovereigns for a drawing into Phil May's hand (he was a cash contributor) and to watch the smile on his mobile face broadening into a joke ; it was something to say one day to a shy youth, called H. G. Wells, " I'm sure you could write stories if you chose " ; it was something to meet daily G. W. Steevens, ripeness in springtime ; it was something to print " The Gods, Some Mortals, and Lord Wickenham," by John Oliver Hobbes, and to observe the growing power of E. J. Sullivan revealing itself in the illustrations ; it was something to publish Roy Devereux's " fashion " articles so beautifully written that clothes in the columns of the " Budget " became allied to literature ; it was something to print Joseph Pennell's illustrations of " The Devils of Notre Dame," with an extraordinarily fine essay by R. A. M. Stevenson, cousin of Louis, who had one of the most original minds of the day ; it was something to originate coloured illustrations in journalism, even if I did explain to the curious that the colour was produced by the editorial finger dipping in red ink ; it was something to profit by the enthusiasm and art knowledge of G. R. Halkett, and to publish his thoughtful

cartoons, also the ribald humour of Raven Hill, and the humour bubbling from structure of Pett Ridge; it was something to help to provide a Christmas tree, four nights on end, to thousands of Mile End children, and to hear the shrieks of joy when the news editor garbed profusely as real Father Christmas entered the hall. What a trouble we had to procure a Christmas Tree! No shop in London could provide one big enough, and Mr. David L. Marks will remember how he was instructed to go into Surrey and not to return until he had procured a fir tree of the right size: he will remember how he returned, wet through, limp with privation, to inform me that the tree was lying on three trucks at Nine Elms siding, and that he had slept by it all night.

Kipling's "Jungle Tales" were delightfully illustrated by Cecil Aldin. Recalling Kipling's slight but pertinent corrections of the typewritten copy, my thoughts fly back to the day when Vernon Blackburn took me to call upon Kipling in Earl's Court Road, and how the great, little man read "The Blind Bug" to us (since transformed into a moving and majestic threnody on Wolcott Balestier —"Beyond the path of the outmost sun through utter darkness hurled") and how when he came to the line "He flicked the blind bug into the dark" he flicked the palm of his left hand with his right finger so vehemently that the blood spurted. "The Blind Bug" appeared

in "The Scots Observer." When Kipling sent the first of the "Barrack Room Ballads" to Henley for "The Scots Observer," Henley asked me (I had called to see him) to dispatch a telegram. "You may read it," he said. It contained three words—"God bless you."

It must have been about this time, in the same hospitable house where I first met Beardsley, where one also met George Meredith, Coventry Patmore, and many other notabilities, that I asked the name of a young man —thoughtful, reticent, attentive, but unbending. So he appeared to me, in mind as in body. His firm, well-knit figure looked as unyielding as a Roman statue, and Roman-like were his features. He might have stepped off an enlarged coin. I asked his name, and was told that he was a poet, who had been an actor—Stephen Phillips. All poets gravitated to the Meynell household. I asked to be presented to him, for already his sad and beautiful "Apparition" was running in our heads, and in our hearts :

"She pushed the hair from off my brow,
And looked into my eyes.
'I live in calm,' she said, 'and there
Am learning to be wise.'"

And that lyric, who could forget it? beginning :

"O thou art put to many uses sweet!
Thy blood will urge the rose, and surge in Spring;
But yet! . . . . . ."

Stephen Phillips and I never became close friends. Perhaps I was too active and often amused: he was reflective and always serious.

Another poet I met about this time was John Davidson, strong, well-set, sensible, but with an extraordinary faculty for overrating his mission as a poet. I remember one evening at the old Hogarth Club he talked to me for an hour on the amenities of suicide. Others were Lionel Johnson, small and soft-footed as a gazelle; Richard Le Gallienne riding Pegasus, like a knight in the age of chivalry, and with a great gift for appreciative criticism. He did a literary page for "The Pall Mall Budget," and made the nineties literature alluring; and Money Coutts (now Lord Latymer), a true poet, who would rather, I think, talk poetry and philosophy on a long country walk than do anything else in the world.

Another memory of the old Hogarth Club comes back to me. It was there one evening that I met John Lane with a black bag, looking wise and important.

"John," I said, "something's up. What is it?"

He lowered his voice and whispered.

"I'm going to start publishing."

Authors seldom say anything nice about publishers, yet publishers are continually saying extraordinarily nice things about authors in advertisements. So why should not I return the compliment (we will not call it praise)

and say some nice things about John Lane of the Bodley Head? Frankly, where would many of the writer and artist flowers just budding in the nineties have been without the fertilisation of the Bodley Head? It was the new publishing, as "The Studio" was the new method of conducting art magazines, and "The Daily Mail" the new journalism. The great problem for an enterprising (or sporting) publisher to consider is how many new authors he can carry, for it must be obvious to all literary folk, and to most intelligent readers, that the first three or four books, at least, of an author are produced at a loss to the publisher. No one knows this better than the Bodley Head, which at its start, and, indeed, throughout, has been identified with the discovery of literary and artistic talent. It must be remembered that when the Bodley Head was started hardly any old publishing house would consider the MS. of an unknown writer unless he was introduced or heralded by some well-known person, or paid for the privilege of appearing in print.

Now that I have thoroughly worked myself up to praise a publisher, let us glance back at the career of the Bodley Head. The first book published by John Lane was a volume of verse by Richard Le Gallienne, "Volumes in Folio," 1888. It was Le Gallienne's first published work. He had, however, printed privately in Liverpool "My Ladies' Sonnets," 1887. In 1890 was published

Le Gallienne's volume "George Meredith: Some Characteristics." It was the earliest serious consideration of Meredith's genius, and it was the incentive for the nineties Meredith worship. This book was written to order on the exact lines prescribed, chapter for chapter. John Lane also published Arnold Bennett's first two books—"A Man from the North," and "Journalism for Women," both in 1898. In 1895 he published H. G. Wells's first work, "Conversations with an Uncle." He had previously published "Poems" and "Sister Songs," by Francis Thompson, and all of Mrs. Meynell's Essays and her volume of Poems. Maurice Hewlett's "Pan and the Young Shepherd" was also issued from this house, and Dora Sigerson's (Mrs. Shorter) "The Fairy Changeling and Other Poems." Were those verses that have haunted me ever since among the "other poems," of which a stanza runs (in it lurks all the wistful, inconclusive Irishry of the Irish):—

> "The kine of my father they are straying from my keeping,
> The young goat's at mischief, but nothing can I do,
> For all through the night I heard the Banshee keening!
> O youth of my loving, and is it well with you?"

Among the artists first exploited by the Bodley Head were—Alastair, Aubrey Beardsley, D. Y. Cameron, Herbert Cole, Charles Conder, Philip Connard, Edmund Dulac, A. H. Fish, C. D. Gibson, F. L. Griggs, Vernon

Hill, Laurence Housman, Jessie King, Norman Lindsay, Donald Maxwell, Helen McKie, E. H. New, H. Ospovat, Maxfield Parrish, Charles Ricketts, W. Graham Robertson, Charles Robinson, Will Rothenstein, George Sheringham, A. O. Spare, Wilson Steer, William Strang, F. H. Townsend, and Lucy Kemp Welch.

The following have acted as publishers' readers for the Bodley Head—Le Gallienne, John Davidson, G. S. Street, W. J. Locke, and John Buchan during his residence at Oxford.

Now, having done my duty, which is also my pleasure, to the publisher of this volume (I suspect it is the aura of the nineties that made me dare to do it) I will proceed to more personal matters.

Whistler had ceased to frequent the Hogarth when I was a member, but we met in the early nineties under, to me, memorable, significant, and altogether happy circumstances. It was at a studio gathering in Chelsea after a wedding and I had been having a furious argument with an unknown lady about Jean-François Millet. A slight man, very alert and rather a dandy, seemed much amused. After examining us for awhile, with quick bird-like movements, he said, "You two should know each other." The man was Whistler; the lady, in 1907, became my wife.

Among the vivid memories of those "Pall Mall

Budget " days two figures linger, one, G. W. Steevens, gone, the other, H. G. Wells, alerter intellectually (yet a youth of twenty might envy his prowess and spirits in the hockey-field) than ever.

When Steevens died in Ladysmith (in Boer War time his articles helped largely to make " The Daily Mail "), there passed on a rare and radiant spirit, who combined the highest chivalry with the highest brain-power, and who was the gentlest and the most sympathetic of companions. I see him now, as on the first day he sauntered into my room at " The Pall Mall," curly-haired G. W. S., slight, stooping, wearing his glasses as anyone else wears a flower. He looked as if he wanted to do nothing, and yet he could do, and did do everything in the writing way, seemingly quite easily, and always with the rarest distinction. He wrote his " Monologues of the Dead " rapidly as one writes a leading article. O those Sundays at Merton Abbey where he lived ; where one enjoyed the infinite variety of Mrs. Steevens, who was wife and mother to George in witty combination ; where one met so many interesting folk—Winston Churchill who would sit frowning in a lonely corner of the drawing-room, and George Gissing who would stand smiling on the lawn as if he had not a care in the world.

The other figure is that of my friend H. G. Wells, whose insight and comprehension grow with the toll of

years. I made his acquaintance oddly. Harry Cust, my chief, when he had not a crisis on, would encourage us to be amusing. One day I said to him, " I want a new friend, please." A few hours later the editorial office boy came to my room and said, " Mr. Cust's compliments and 'eve got a new friend for yer, sir." I hastened to Mr. Cust's apartment (it was more than a room) and there, a little figure, hunched up on a magnificent Maple couch was H. G. Wells. He smiled. I smiled. His overcoat was not Poole's, but his face was like an electrified note of interrogation, questioning and absorbing everything. He was then writing Wellsian articles for " The Pall Mall Gazette," and there was in them that which prompted me one day to suggest that he should write stories for " The Pall Mall Budget." He was game ; he was always game ; and those amazing tales, " the jolly art of making something very bright and moving," to quote his own words (we called them " Single Sitting Stories "), came into the office at the rate of two a week, in copper-plate handwriting with the regularity of a pendulum. So H. G. began his career as a writer of fiction. I touched the button only, or as he neatly puts it in the introduction to " The Country of the Blind " : " Mr. Lewis Hind's (it's the first time he ever addressed me as Mr.) indicating finger had shown me an amusing possibility of the mind."

One day Mr. Astor's solicitor, Mr. John Coode Adams,

informed us that the publication of "The Pall Mall Budget" would cease with the following issue. As I have said, we were never astonished in the nineties. Consequently I made methodical preparations for a final issue of an overwhelmingly magnificent character, a full orchestra swan-song, and prepared (secretly overjoyed) to depart for Cornwall, where I would paint pictures, finish a novel, and write a topographical book on the Duchy. Charles Marriott, whose first book, "The Column"—through the publication of which he attained at one bound a front rank in the literary world—was published by John Lane, was then living at St. Ives, and had promised to be my companion in the search for stone circles, Cornish crosses, trout streams, and traces of the Phœnicians.

"The Pall Mall Budget" ended bravely and suddenly, quick as a snapped twig. In the last bumper number I printed the following announcement under the front page illustration. "The publication of 'The Pall Mall Budget' ceases with this issue." The staff held a Wake, at which I was presented with a document containing illustrations by the artists, and the signatures of the literary staff, with comments. George Steevens added the words "The Grumbler" after his signature. I had induced him to survey the political world in the "Budget" week by week, under the heading "The Grumbler."

He grumbled so profoundly that people complained. Phil May made for "The Wake" document the best portrait of himself that he ever did.

The illustration on the editorial page of the last number of "The Budget" was a charming picture by F. H. Townsend showing a Pierrot drawing the blind of the office window.

People wondered why "The Pall Mall Budget" had ceased. I dissembled. I knew nothing.

The Cornish adventure was a little delayed by some rough traffic I had with Mr. Harry Furniss's "The New Budget" (for a time I was editor of that, too); it came out, to everybody's astonishment, the week after the cessation of "The Pall Mall Budget" with the same staff, and with "Lika Joko" interjected into its pages. In the autumn of 1895 I was free for Cornwall, and there I spent nine extraordinarily happy months. The worse I painted the happier I became.

In the early summer of 1896, when I was beginning to wonder why each picture I produced became more and more like a Japanese print; when the flowers and yellow sands of Cornwall were lovelier than ever, and life seemed one long primrose way, there came a bolt from the grey skies of London, in the shape of a letter, which resulted in seven years as editor of "The Academy."

The letter was from Mr. John Morgan Richards, most

forbearing, most encouraging, and most generous of proprietors, asking if I was willing to return to London and to journalism: if so, Mr. Richards offered either to found a new paper for me to edit or to purchase any existing journal that I might select.

That was all. I pretended that I wanted time to think it over, but in my heart I knew that I had said "yes" the moment I read the letter. The lure of the adventure was overmastering.

Within two days I was in London, studying the journals of the day strewn upon the club table, and wondering which to ask Mr. Richards to buy. It was John Lane, ever ready in a crisis, who helped me to a decision. When I showed him Mr. Richards's letter, of which I was rather proud, he said promptly, "'The Academy' is in the market. That's the paper for you."

Had I the choice over again I should certainly start with a clean sheet and a brand-new journal. The weight of Academy precedent on our young shoulders was over heavy; I could never quite induce the advertisement manager to cease informing me that our transformed journal was still read in foreign universities. I didn't believe it, and don't to-day either. "The Academy" for years had been a highly esteemed, deeply learned publication. In the early days of my editorship old gentlemen in skull caps, and cloth boots, would call at the office asking if

they were to continue their lucubrations; there were founts of type in the printing department, in strange cubist characters, for the printing of extracts from forgotten languages, and letters came from country parsonages begging us to continue the correspondence on "The Round Towers of Ireland." That was not our game, the "our" being my friends and fellow-workers on "The Academy"—E. V. Lucas and Wilfred Whitten, and later C. K. Burrow.

It was a chance that brought us into that eager and jolly fraternity of "The Academy," it was a chance, why should I not call it guidance, that, some years before, led to my meeting with that dear and brilliant lady, Pearl Craigie, the eldest daughter of John Morgan Richards, known to the world as John Oliver Hobbes. Our friendship began simply and rather oddly, due to a gust of enthusiasm on my part similar to that which in the early days of "The Art Journal," led to my friendship with the Meynell household. On a Friday, in my first week at "The Art Journal," a batch of proofs came down to my room. One article signed Alice Meynell so impressed me that I said to myself, "I must know this lady. I won't send this proof by post, I'll deliver it by hand on Sunday afternoon." That I did and a world of the finest friendship and the finest literature was opened to me.

Young men, trust your instincts.

A similar gust of enthusiasm sent me a year or so later rushing down to Chelsea to place my intellectual admiration at the feet of Miss Janet Achurch on the morrow of her first performance of " Norah " in " The Doll's House." That was my first meeting with George Bernard Shaw and William Archer, during the wonderful week at the old Novelty Theatre, when " The Doll's House " was first played. In the last act when Norah slammed the door she closed the old drama of England, and opened our eyes to the new. I went to the Novelty three nights running, and G. B. S. and W. A. were there on each occasion. And after reading " A Girl in the Carpathians " I am sure that I should have rushed off to make the acquaintance of Ménie Muriel Dowie had she been in England : that delight came later.

Another gust of enthusiasm (there have been others, and I have no doubt there are more to come) gave me the friendship of Pearl Craigie.

" Some Emotions and a Moral," by John Oliver Hobbes, was published in my " Art Journal " days, and so delighted was I with the wit, charm and insight of that gallant little book that I wrote a letter to John Oliver Hobbes (obviously Hobbes was a woman) asking if I might call upon her. I was bidden to 56, Lancaster Gate one Sunday afternoon, and there I found Pearl Craigie,

young, charming and witty, ever-helpful friend. Her interest in "The Academy" was immense, and when, after some weeks of preparation, we published the first issue of the new series on November 14th, 1896, there reached me at the office the first of her many weekly letters of discriminating praise, and helpful criticism. Another kind and encouraging letter came from J. M. Barrie; that was like Barrie. I first saw him when he and Marriott Watson took the call after the first performance of "Richard Savage"—Barrie the size of a lead pencil, Marriott Watson a fir tree.

After the freedom of "The Pall Mall Budget" the convention of "The Academy," from which we could never quite free ourselves, was oppressive. The convention was those heavy pages, containing heavy reviews of heavy books which burdened the first half of the paper. I feared to break that convention: now, with the indifference to tradition, and to what people think, or don't think, that comes with middle age, I should scrap the old tradition immediately. I remember in January of 1897 I persuaded H. G. Wells to review Lloyd Morgan's "Habit and Instinct." He wrote three columns, good columns, but it was poor reading after "The Stolen Bacillus." There is something deadening about a long book review in a serious paper that is trying to be gay. Even Bernard Shaw could not galvanise his notice of

Ibsen's "John Gabriel Brokman" into life. When I asked G. B. S. to write this review I informed him of the modest remuneration that awaited him. He replied that his terms were £5 or nothing. My impulse was to send him a wire, saying—"Right-o nix." But the idea that I was editing a journal wherein some of the contributors had known all the allusions in a Coptic manuscript and none in "The Referee," prevailed, and I sent him a silly formal letter saying that "The Academy" was agreeable to an honorarium of £5. I had learnt on "The Art Journal" that it was good breeding always to refer to payment for literary goods delivered as an "honorarium."

When Arnold Bennett joined "The Academy" staff he, to use an expression which I am sure he would use himself, "made things hum"; when Francis Thompson joined us he gave to its pages the prose of a man of genius. Apart from what they wrote, purely from an editor's standpoint, of method and punctuality, Arnold Bennett was the best possible, and Francis Thompson the worst possible contributor. The difference between them was that Arnold Bennett always did what he promised to do—with a bit more—and Thompson, well, his articles were always so valuable, and he was always so sorry for mistaking Friday for Wednesday, and six in the evening for noon, that in preparing the paper for press

I learnt never to count upon anything by Francis Thompson until it was actually in my hands. His "Ode on the Death of Cecil Rhodes," which I had urged him to write, was brought to me by a bewildered Thompson when the paper should have been going to press, in various pieces, written upon the backs of envelopes and toilet papers, produced from various pockets. I gave him half a crown to buy food, as in those days "The Academy" was his banker. I pieced the pieces of the Ode together and had them put into type. When Francis Thompson returned an hour or so later, flushed and momentarily easy in body, he read the proof swaying (I see him now) and said in his slow, distinct enunciation, a little blurred, maybe, at that moment, "It's all right, Hind." It was. There was not a word to alter in it. Such was Francis Thompson. However much he neglected his body, his mind and soul were sacred, inviolate. This man of genius was lovable, and to be with him, if time did not matter, was an exhilaration, also an anxiety. E. V. Lucas will remember the vicissitudes of that day when we took Thompson to call upon Henley at Muswell Hill, and on the way Thompson had what he called a "rigour" by a ditch. His thin body went off into a trance, shook to and fro, and I thought he was about to evaporate. He recovered, had a fit of nausea, then became suddenly companionable

and amusing, for Thompson was interested in everything, and would talk on anything by the yard, from cricket, letters, or mysticism, to the man who five years before had stolen his overcoat by mistake.

Henley, a splendid leonine figure, hair and beard now white, sat in a high chair, and Thompson, swaying on a low stool, crouched at his feet. Henley was slightly ruffled when we arrived, as we were (it was, of course, Thompson's fault) two hours and five minutes late. Before entering I had said to the poet, " Francis, we're dreadfully late. Henley will be mad. You must get him into a good humour by laying the butter on thick—thick, mind you."

Francis, who was as literal as he was unpractical, proceeded to lay it on thick, yet with sincerity, and with the air that Shakespeare must have shown when he killed a calf. The encounter between the two poets was entirely successful. They had, I remember, a rambling bout over Virgil, and courteously compared each other with the Mantuan.

Arnold Bennett was the ideal contributor, punctual as the postman, who always did everything better than you thought he could. He has told in print, in his sledge-hammer, afternoon-tea way how he came to write " The Truth About an Author " for " The Academy " ; but he has not told how one afternoon he informed me that

he had, neatly and precisely, arranged his future—so many novels for fame, so many for fun, so many for money ; plays divided up in the same way ; residence in France, a French wife, and so on. Being Arnold Bennett it all came out just as he had foretold. I suppose that if we were all Arnold Bennetts, the brain working to its limit, and doing just what the will orders, the Kingdom of Efficiency would encompass us.

How we of " The Academy " endeavoured, in those days, to relate literature to life : how we strove to instil change and the happy accidents of events into our solemn weekly chronicle. We were for ever altering the make-up, and introducing " features." We began the system, which has since become universal, of publishing a short account, sometimes pungent, sometimes perfunctory, of new books in the week they appeared ; we published thirty and more articles on " Some Younger Reputations " ; and modern short stories translated from the French, accompanied by " at home portraits " of the authors : some of them looked like hirsute Odalisques. We had Walkley for the drama, Mrs. Meynell the art, latterly I did it ; Arthur Symons the music, and Dr. Saleeby the science—his first flight into letters ; we printed T. W. H. Crosland's Fables ; we incorporated " Literature " ; we published " Things Seen " ; we introduced Literary Competitions : many of the competitors found in them

a starting-off place towards renown. One of these competitions is vivid to me. A friend had published a book, which I handed, without any instructions, to a suitable reviewer. The review was unfavourable, and brought me a very angry letter from the author. Disinclined to answer it, I had the happy, or unhappy idea, of making the answer the subject of one of our literary competitions. " How should a courteous editor reply to this discourteous letter ? " we asked. The angry author wrote again demanding an answer to his strictures. In the next issue he received thirty-two replies, couched in Johnsonian, Carlylean, Stevensonian, and Andrew Langian language. As no names were mentioned I hope he smiled.

Another correspondent, a poet this time, whose volume had been " done " by a reviewer who was also a poet, sent me a postcard containing two words " You beast ! " As he signed his name in full we rather liked him for it.

My old friend Clarence Rook wrote a series of amusing and true articles called " What the People Read " ; we sent out postcards each January asking for the names of two books that had interested the eminent in the past year ; we made the biggest " scoop " any literary paper has ever enjoyed by unearthing from Messrs. Quaritch's new catalogue an article in small print that Gladstone had written on his experiences as a book collector, and publishing it in bold, leaded type, after

telegraphing to Hawarden for permission. I do not think there was a paper in the country that did not quote "The Academy's" reprint of this article, and it cost us nothing. Messrs. Quaritch consented readily, and perhaps enjoyed the advertisement, so perhaps did the G.O.M. Oh, I used to send him parcels of new theological works for which we had no use, hoping one day to draw an article. The Grand Old Man always acknowledged the gift, and always said that he trusted he would profit by a perusal of the volumes. But our largest and most lasting intrusion into popularity was the "crowning" of books of signal merit published during the past year. This innovation arose out of our temerity in printing a "Suggested Academy of British Men of Letters," on the model of the French Academy.

So at last I come to Stephen Phillips, who was not included among the forty. Neither, strange to say, was T. E. Brown, although a eulogy of that fine poet and prose writer appeared on the page facing the names of the "Immortal Forty." He was alive when we drew up the list. I should certainly include T. E. Brown now. There are a dozen of the chosen that could give place to Stephen Phillips, and to the author of "Fo'c's'le Yarns" and

> "How the great Mother mixes all our bloods.
> O breeze, O swaying buds!
> O lambs, O primroses, O floods!"

They were real poets, singing from their hearts, not delvers into misty history, and consolidators of musty opinions.

The task of choosing forty names for an Academy of Letters was one of magnitude and some misery. We knew that, however the list was fashioned, we should be violently criticised, and, I, for one, could not claim a profound defensive acquaintance with the works of the Duke of Argyll, the Rev. Aidan Gasquet, and Dr. Salmon. However, we settled at last upon a list, prefixed by half a column of explanation, which included the statement that we would " crown " two books of signal merit, to the amount of one hundred and fifty guineas. That showed we meant business.

I have already referred to Mr. John Morgan Richards as a delightful proprietor. He was. When I informed him that our " crowning " scheme would mean a leakage from his pocket of 150 guineas all he said was " Admirable ! "

The list of the Forty Immortals appeared in the issue of " The Academy " for November 6th, 1897. Here follow the names:

John Ruskin	W. E. H. Lecky
W. E. Gladstone	S. R. Gardiner
Herbert Spencer	Bishop Creighton
Duke of Argyll	Bishop Stubbs

A. C. Swinburne	Rev. Aidan Gasquet
George Meredith	W. E. Henley
John Morley	Andrew Lang
Thomas Hardy	William Archer
James Bryce	H. D. Traill
Sir G. O. Trevelyan	Edmund Gosse
Leslie Stephen	Mrs. Meynell
George Macdonald	Mrs. Humphry Ward
R. D. Blackmore	Francis Thompson
Rudyard Kipling	W. B. Yeats
Aubrey de Vere	Henry James
R. C. Jebb	Austin Dobson
Dr. Salmon	J. M. Barrie
W. W. Skeat	A. W. Pinero
Dr. J. A. H. Murray	W. S. Gilbert
A. P. Ker	" Lewis Carroll."

When the list was issued I retired to Winchelsea for a few days to recruit, and in the train I remember asking myself why we had not included G. Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells. I cycled over to Sandgate to put the question to Wells. Joseph Conrad was there (I think that was the occasion) and we spent the afternoon sitting on the seashore, throwing stones at bottles we had cast into the sea. Conrad, I remember, bewailed the difficulty he had in writing " the English." They were both Henley's " young men."

Henley published Wells's "Time Machine" in the "New Review," and also that magnificent early Conrad story "The Nigger of the Narcissus." G. S. Street was another of Henley's "young men." He wrote his "Autobiography of a Boy" so well because he was mature, ripe, while he was still a boy. He was not a good cricketer: he would put his hands in his pocket when offered a catch. While at Winchelsea Ford Madox Hueffer walked me over to Rye to call upon Henry James at Lamb House, and I realised again how companionable great men can be. In those days I thought that it was not politic to flatter Hueffer, as he was so sure of himself. One evening someone sang a song—very beautiful words and very beautiful music. When it ended, I, much affected, said—"Words by Shakespeare, music by Purcell, surely. What a combination. It needs two men like that really to move one." After a pause Hueffer said in a tired voice, "I wrote the words and the music." One afternoon at Henry James's I said some nice things about his canary, to which he answered, "I thank you, my friend, I thank you. The little creature sings his song of gratitude and adoration, with the slightest —er—modicum of encouragement from me."

The fun, following our list of the "Immortal Forty," began in the next issue of "The Academy" with nine columns of letters; but of course the most readable

were those we could not print. Our correspondents included Gladstone, Oscar Browning, G. Bernard Shaw, the Head Master of Harrow, " A Lonely Reader " who was John Oliver Hobbes, Dr. Robertson Nicoll, F. Anstey and the Chief Rabbi. Mr. H. G. Wells asked, with his usual common sense, " Why does the Duke of Argyll always figure in this sort of thing ? " That question has never been answered : it is one of the best riddles of the nineties. Mr. Wells also asked—he was rather daring—" Who is Mr. W. P. Ker, and who is the Rev. Aidan Gasquet ? " Mr. George Bernard Shaw in his letter remarked, " Mr. Pinero and Mr. Gilbert are no more men of letters than I am," and he concluded by congratulating " The Academy " on " the cleverest advertisement of the year."

It was not very long after this that the real " British Academy of Letters " was founded. Perhaps our light knife opened the laborious oyster. When the names of the Real Academy were announced Andrew Lang informed the world through Longman's Magazine that when he enquired of an eminent friend about the constituency of " The British Academy of Letters," the eminent one replied : " Oh, it's just a lot of dull Johnnies who got in on the ground floor."

I did not enjoy myself very much after I returned from Winchelsea because we had stupidly stated that

our list was tentative, and that our final choice would be published on December 4th. A problem presented itself. I felt that I had not the heart to delete the names of the Rev. Aidan Gasquet and Dr. Salmon. They were just beginning to know what popularity was. They were beginning to bask in it. And to delete the name of the Duke of Argyll would be unpatriotic. Furtively I asked everyone I met if they had ever read anything by the Duke. The answer was always in the negative.

There seemed, however, a sporting chance of one of the Immortals being excluded on his own initiative. In "The Academy" for November 27th, 1897, we reprinted the following letter from Algernon Charles Swinburne, which had appeared during the week in "The Times."

"Sir,—In this decadent month, after the great sea-serpent has usually risen once more to the surface of the Press—only, perhaps, to be choked in a far more unseasonable effort to emulate the digestion of other contributors by swallowing the gigantic gooseberry—no sensible man will feel and no honest man will affect surprise at the resurrection of a more 'ridiculous monster' than these. The notion of an English Academy is too seriously stupid for farce and too essentially vulgar for comedy. But that a man whose outspoken derision of the Academic ideal or idea has stood on record for more than a few years, and given deep offence to nameless if high-minded censors by the frank expression of its con-

tempt and the unqualified vehemence of its ridicule, should enjoy the unsolicited honour of nomination to a prominent place in so unimaginable a gathering—*colluvies literatum* it probably would turn out to be, if ever it slunk into shape and writhed into existence—well, it seems to me that the full and proper definition of so preposterous an impertinence must be left to others than the bearer of the name selected for the adulation of such insult."

Our comment on this letter was neat. We remarked that we had elected Mr. Swinburne for his poetry, not for his prose.

December 4th drew near, when we had promised to issue our Final List of names for an Academy of Forty. Alas, once more we were rather pusillanimous. At this distance of time it seems to me that it would have been so easy to be courageous; but I am not the only wight who has found that the editor's chair makes one as cautious as a Coalition statesman, and with as pale and perfervid a passion for the non-committal. What we said was this (it showed a glimmer of pluck, I think, to include Mr. Swinburne's housemate, Mr. Theodore Watts-Dunton):—

AN ACADEMY OF LETTERS

We do not propose to make any change in our selection; but if it were desired to increase the number of Academicians from forty to fifty, the suggestions

of our correspondents (we didn't really care twopence what our correspondents said) would indicate the following additional names:

James Martineau	Frederic Harrison
Edward Caird	William Watson
Henry Sidgwick	Sir Walter Besant
Lord Acton	Edward Dowden
F. Max Muller	T. Watts-Dunton

Selah!

Between whiles we were trying to make up our minds which books to "crown." What a groping it was! Obviously we could only read a minute fraction of the year's books, but an editor develops an extraordinary sense for scenting merit, and I fancy that Stephen Phillips was already a favourite. He was one of the numerous "Some Younger Reputations" patted and petted in this issue of December 4th and succeeding weeks. It may be interesting to print the names of these "Younger Reputations" who received a column apiece, and 1916 may judge the judgment of 1897. The chosen were: W. B. Yeats, George Gissing, Anthony Hope, John Davidson, H. S. Merriman, Quiller-Couch, "Benjamin Swift," Owen Seaman, H. G. Wells, Stephen Phillips, Charles Whibley, Arthur Morrison, Kenneth Grahame, Robert Hichens, Barry Pain, G. W. Steevens, Winifred

Lucas, Max Beerbohm, G. S. Street, Laurence Housman, W. W. Jacobs, A. C. Benson, H. D. Lowry, Katharine Tynan, Richard Le Gallienne, Pett Ridge, Walter Raleigh, and Marriott Watson. Sadly but firmly we decided to exclude ourselves.

Of Phillips's "Christ in Hades" we had written: "It is a performance, and a very complete performance. Christianity is too personal to be spoken of impartially. It is precisely this unusual impersonality, this missing moderation, that Mr. Phillips supplies to modern verse. He strives to give a bygone calm to thoughts and feelings that are still in ferment in most minds. He has the old dignity in union with the modern intimacy."

That strikes me now as pertinent and just.

In the issue of January 1st, 1898, we published a five column review of "Poems," by Stephen Phillips (John Lane), in which we recalled that in 1890 Mr. Stephen Phillips was one of four friends who published at Oxford a slender brown-paper-covered pamphlet of poetry called "Primavera." The other friends were Laurence Binyon, Manmohan Ghose and A. S. Cripps. We also remarked that "with 'Christ in Hades,' Mr. Phillips made a remarkable advance," adding that the poem has "qualities—a distinction and an individuality—which lifts it out of the category of minor verse, and has attracted widespread attention to this poem which has the Virgilian

stateliness and Virgilian simplicity." The conclusion of the review was:

"We trust that Mr. Phillips will take 'Christ in Hades' as his standard, and will be content with nothing which does not at least equal that, alike in individuality of outlook, and in the perfect fusion of matter into form which is that indefinable, inevitable, undeniable thing, style."

The wind of "crowning" was veering Phillips-wards; but there were many competitive gusts which set us doubting and reconsidering. The moment came when a final decision must be made. How well I remember the sigh of relief with which about 10 p.m. on the evening of January 13th, 1898 (press night), I passed the "Awards" article for press, and adjourned to the 'Old Cock' tavern (rebuilt on a different site) feeling that we had earned the 1898 equivalent of Tennyson's chop and pint of port. The following morning I hurried to the office and read the following with—equanimity:

THE "CROWNED" BOOKS

"In accordance with our intention to crown two books of signal merit published in 1897, we have made the following awards:

ONE HUNDRED GUINEAS to Mr. Stephen Phillips for his volume of 'Poems.'

FIFTY GUINEAS to Mr. William Ernest Henley

for his Essay on the 'Life, Genius, and Achievement of Burns,' contained in the fourth volume of the Centenary Edition of 'The Poetry of Robert Burns.'"

Following the announcement was this article, which was not written easily:

The bestowal of the awards has been beset with difficulties. As our readers have had an opportunity of seeing, the men of letters of whom we requested an opinion differed so completely as to be of little help as guides. The task of selecting recipients, therefore, devolved wholly upon ourselves. Before proceeding to choose it was necessary first to reply to the question: Are these awards intended more for the encouragement or for the recognition of merit? In other words: Is it more desirable to find young writers of striking potentialities and to help them on their way, or to select two of the best books of the year irrespective of the age or standing of their authors? The answer was that in the present instance excellence of performance was to be preferred above richness of promise, "excellence" as here used implying good matter, good manner, and good personality. So much premised, we turned to our duty.

The result of the searching enquiry into the merits of some half-score of the foremost books of 1897 was that a cheque for one hundred guineas has been sent to Mr. Stephen Phillips for his volume of *Poems*, and a cheque for fifty guineas to Mr. W. E. Henley for his essay on *Burns*. In other columns the reader will find articles on these works, which should afford reasons enough for

the faith that is in us. It is not likely that the choice will please everyone—indeed, the suggestions from outside which have already been printed in "The Academy" are sufficient testimony to the contrary—but the most patient consideration of the whole matter convinces us that we have done well.

Mr. Stephen Phillips's poetical rivals were three in number—Mr. Francis Thompson, Mr. Watson, and Mr. Newbolt. We think, however, of Mr. Thompson's 1897 volume more as a collection of magnificent experiments than matured poems; while, on the other hand, Mr. William Watson's "Hope of the World" causes us to glance back to what he has done rather than to look forward to what he may do. More persistent rivalry was that of Mr. Newbolt, whose "Admirals All" holds in its thirty pages a kind of straightforward, vigorous, musical national verse of which Englishmen cannot have too much. But good though we consider these ballads, they have not the shining merit of Mr. Phillips's work, nor can we hold them quite worthy of the honour of "coronation."

In criticism Mr. Henley's position was contested by Mr. W. P. Ker's "Epic and Romance," Mr. Walter Raleigh's "Style," and Mr. Arthur Symons's "Studies in Two Literatures." Against each, however, some objection held. Mr. Ker's volume, erudite and fascinating though it be, is eminently academic—that is to say, the good personality that might be there, and in a work of literature should be there, has been too vigorously suppressed in the cause of learning. Mr. Raleigh's brilliant essay has literary skill and distinction in a degree not often to be met with; but it savours over much of a

tour de force. Mr. Symons's "Studies in Two Literatures" is a thoughtful, graceful work, but it is detached, a series of flutters rather than a steady flight.

Other claimants were, especially in fiction, numerous, and possessed of considerable right to be heard. Mr. Joseph Conrad's "Nigger of the Narcissus" was judged to be too slight and episodic, although we consider it a remarkable imaginative feat, marked by striking literary power. Again, Mr. Benjamin Swift's "The Tormentor" stands out as a vivid and commendable performance, although its author's method is still too immature and spasmodic to be within the scope of the Academy's awards. Mr. Kipling has himself fixed his standard too high for "Captains Courageous" to be satisfying; and "The Skipper's Wooing" by Mr. Jacobs and "The King with Two Faces" by Miss Coleridge, in different ways, do not quite comply with the requirements set forth in the definition of "excellence" given above. The author of "St. Ives" is, alas, dead. Mrs. Craigie, we may add, expressed a wish that "The School for Saints" should not be entered for competition.

Two other claimants remain, Mme. Darmesteter for her "Life of Renan" and Mrs. Constance Garnett for her admirable translation of Turgenev's novels into English. Mrs. Garnett has been at work for some years in the prosecution of her task; but it came practically to an end in 1897 with the publication of the eleventh volume, "Torrents of Spring." Translation was held, however, to be outside our scope; and Mme. Darmesteter's biography, beautiful and tender though it be, had to give place to Mr. Henley's "Burns."

Accompanying this editorial was another appreciation of Stephen Phillips's "Poems" and a eulogy of Henley's "Essay on Burns." It began: "The first thing—and, for the matter of that, the last thing—that strikes one in Mr. Henley's essay is the victorious art of it"; the notice ended: "Let us be grateful to Mr. Henley's art for having given us the real presentment of a real man."

We sent off the cheques. Henley in his letter of acknowledgment wrote: "I am proud to be in the same boat as the author of 'Christ in Hades.'"

The "crowning" was received graciously and quietly. The sun continued to rise and set. We settled down cheerfully to the year's work. Most people seemed so astonished that anybody should take the trouble to crown books at all and to spend money over it (everybody was just beginning to want a motor) that they hardly thought about criticising our choice. As to the authors of books published in 1897—two at least were pleased.

In the latter years of his life Stephen Phillips was editor of "The Poetry Review." From the issue of January–February, 1916, I quote the conclusion of an appreciative and affectionate article by his co-editor, Mr. Galloway Kyle:

"Of the newspaper tributes the most singular and sincere, breathing a wise understanding, appeared in

INTRODUCTION

'The Sunday Times,' at once a notable epitome and a rebuke.

FOR STEPHEN PHILLIPS*

Obiit December 9th, 1915.

Now you are dead and past the bitter fret
And the long doubt and the disputed throne,
And the contempts which turn the heart to stone,—
Who that hath wit shall breathe you a regret?
Who that hath tears shall pay you pity's debt?
Unto your place of easing you are gone,
Having fetched for us Beauty from her own
Lodges of gold by silver orchards set.
Oh mortal man that looked in angels' eyes
And still of baseness took both rood and reed,
Griever who wed bright visions to great sounds,
Teller of sorrowful proud histories;
We put our silly fingers in your wounds
And it is well that they no longer bleed.

As a complement we add the lines of a devoted friend:

He lies in solemn and primeval rest
On a proud hill that scans the southern sea,
Where waves that restless heave shall hush their surge
Nightly while stars are radiant in their fold.
The Titan sleeps! Sleeps here a Grecian god
Who from the largess of his golden store
Unbosomed beauty in the fervid phrase—
The mellow, haunting strain of myriad spheres!
O Poet! This drear age was all too deaf
To thy æonian strain! Thy noble brow
Was crowned with laurels, giving place to thorns
That stabbed into thy brain, and laid thee low,
And though thou sink'st to death, this soil shall soon
Bloom afresh with resurrected fame
To balm thy bleeding wounds and call thee Blest!

On that grave high above Hastings is laid the wreath of laurel entwined with other unfading symbols sent in the name of the Poetry Society and inscribed: 'In affection and gratitude' and the lines 'Beautiful are the dead,' which the poet chose to be represented by in the anthology of twentieth-century poetry, A Cluster of Grapes."

The same issue of "The Poetry Review" contained a memorable essay by Mrs. Meynell on Stephen Phillips, in which she claims a high place for his lyrics. "Famous in an undramatic age as a poet-dramatist, famous by merit, and also by solitariness, Stephen Phillips, in a lyrical age, yet remains more eminent as a lyrist. Where he had no contemporary competitors his work did not keep the stage, and where he had many contemporary rivals he stands apart and alone in a strange success. This seems to me the paradoxical fortune of his poetry and career."

His fellow poets, Mr. William Watson, Mr. Le Gallienne, and others wrote, in early years, when his fame was just beginning, in warmest appreciation of his poetry. Those who "know," knew that the following in "The Daily Chronicle" on "Christ in Hades" could only be by Lionel Johnson. "The poem has the Sophoclean simplicity so full of subtle suggestion and the Lucretian solemnity so full of sudden loveliness; and the result is Virgilian."

INTRODUCTION

Lionel Johnson, poet and man of letters, wraith of a man, who never looked other than an inspired boy, was one of our most valued reviewers on "The Academy." The trouble with him was that he would bar the door at Danes Inn, where he lived, and keep books just as long as he chose. While reading other people's duller proofs we were wont to declaim aloud, for the mere pleasure of intoning the majestic periods, such Lionel Johnsonian passages as "some dark and plangent utterance of Lucretius, some dim, half-murmured thought of Pascal." And for long there were certain passages from "Christ in Hades" that I rolled forth in the office when a tonic seemed necessary—passages such as—

> "So the tall dead stood drooping around Christ,
> Under the falling peace intensely still";

and—

> "Toward him in faded purple, pacing came
> Dead emperors, and sad unflattered kings;
> Unlucky captains listless armies led;
> Poets with frozen music on their lips
> Toward the pale Brilliance sighed."

That first crowning episode was in the early years of my direction of "The Academy." The 1898 books we "crowned" were Sidney Lee's "Life of Shakespeare," Maurice Hewlett's "Forest Lovers," and Joseph Conrad's "Tales of Unrest." Many cheerful episodes

happened later, including a complete transformation of the paper and the introduction of illustrations. They included a series of caricatures by Max Beerbohm. One of Andrew Lang rather distressed me. So I asked if he minded. He replied, " Not at all. The world will take it quite tranquilly." Then there was a day when W. B. Yeats brought a young man, fresh to London, called John Masefield, to the office ; and a night which Herbert Trench and I spent, somewhere at the back of Bloomsbury, listening to W. B. Yeats read his poetry aloud. He knelt on the floor by the light of one candle guttering on the table ; on, on he read—impassioned, oracular, fine, until dawn came, and we crept downstairs, leaving Yeats, I believe, still reading.

There was a day when I accompanied Wilfrid Meynell to Box Hill to dine with George Meredith. He was in high spirits, his talk was like flashing swords, and his bright eyes and thin hands were ever in movement. Yet I remember him quiescent, still as a tree. It was a summer evening, and when we arrived at his house, we were told that Meredith was still in his workroom chalet built on an eminence, a tallish flowery hill rising from the garden. We waited below, and presently he came out of the chalet, just as the sun was setting. He was clad in white or light grey, and he wore an ochre sombrero hat. As he emerged from the chalet the round orb of

the setting sun met his eyes. With a large gesture (he did not know that he was observed) he swept the hat from his head, and bowed, as a subject might to a sovereign, and remained in that position for some seconds. It was a vision splendid, a glow of light and exultation: it remains. How different was an afternoon I spent with Thomas Hardy at Dorchester—yet a memorable afternoon. He told me that he would write no more novels, but he did not tell me that he was then composing what may prove to be the greatest of his many great works—"The Dynasts." There was a week when Stephen Crane, who was half a genius, invited all his friends to Brede Place, in Sussex, which he had rented —a strange exciting week. A play was performed composed by several eminent authors—such a mouse of a play from the mountain of talent. Stephen Crane won fame by his "Red Badge of Courage" before he had seen a battle. When he returned from the Balkan campaign his first words were, "The Red Badge is all right."

Those were jolly times, crowded with interests, but by 1903, when I had served seven years on "The Academy," I began to grow somewhat tired of books in bulk, and eager for a fresh adventure. Had I not always maintained that no one should edit a paper for longer than seven years? Moreover there was a certain

long-planned European picture tour that I wanted to take in order to obtain material for "The Education of an Artist," which was the first art novel to be published serially. Sir Henry Norman, statesman and man of letters, who was then editing "The World's Work," published it month by month, and gave the art education of Claude Williamson Shaw a magnificent embroidery of illustrations. When Robert Ross reviewed the book, after it was issued in volume form—one of his humorous scholarly, essay-story-reviews—I noticed the peculiarity that I have often observed in his reviews of books and pictures. They are usually more interesting than the book or picture he is considering.

Besides that European picture tour, I was at that time fretting to start a weekly penny paper to be called "Art" with two surprising supplements in colour in each issue, heralding the Art of To-morrow, and pages of writing that would be like songs. So what with one thing and another, the new book and the new paper, I was willing to descend from the bridge of "The Academy" but hesitated to step off. Lucas had gone to brighten "Punch" and to write books which everybody reads, and Whitten had left to edit "T.P.'s Weekly," which he did wonderfully well, also to write more fine prose, and to instruct Londoners in the love of London; and I, rather lonely, began to

realise that I was becoming more interested in art than in literature; that the works of Courbet, Daumier, Turner, Cézanne, and Augustus John made my heart beat faster than the works of Dr. Salmon, the Poet Laureate, the Rev. Aidan Gasquet and Bishop Stubbs, So one day in 1903, having bidden an affectionate editorial farewell to John Morgan Richards, I handed over the reins of "The Academy" to Mr. Teignmouth Shore, and went east again.

Geographically I went west, for in all breathing spaces I have gone to Cornwall. I like painting because I like trying to do the impossible when no one is looking, and I like writing because—what else should one do? Writing is more pleasurable and more profitable than anything else—to me.

* * * * *

In this time of war—when everything is crooked, when the young poets are soldiers and the elder ones are guarding reservoirs; when one awakes in the morning so astonished at still being alive that the shock brings back the old appetite for a meat breakfast; when half the Christian world is trying to kill the other half in the most unchristian and unpleasant way—it is salutary to dwell on the nineties when everything ran so easily, and when one would spend a week cogitating Blake's apothegm

INTRODUCTION

—"Damn braces, bless relaxes," and another week trying to find the author of the lines—

> "Love that prevailed,
> Through simple art,
> Of loving to the end."

Those days become more and more vivid to me—nearer and nearer close in the memories of the men and boys who trod that sometimes dusty—but always delightful—primrose way.

> You pass, you children of the pen,
> No more the pen you sway.
> How near you seem, you boys and men,
> Who trod the nineties way.

But I must cease chattering and drop, fondly and gratefully, the corner of the curtain that I lifted at the invitation of the publisher of "Christ in Hades," who flitted benignantly, and always with encouragement, through the nineties.

All is over—all is beginning anew.

* Note.—The sonnet on page 60 is by Mr. T. W. H. Crosland, by whose kind permission and that of Mr. Martin Secker, the publisher of his Collected Poems, it is printed here.

CHRIST IN HADES

"Come, my Hermes, Come!
'Tis time to fetch me."

CHRIST IN HADES

A PHANTASY

EEN as a blinded man, at dawn awake,
Smells in the dark the cold odour of earth;
Eastward he turns his eyes, and over him
A dreadful freshness exquisitely breathes;
The room is brightening, even his own face!
So the excluded ghosts in Hades felt
A waft of early sweet, and heard the rain
Of Spring beginning over them; they all
Stood still, and in each other's faces looked.
And restless grew their queen Persephone;

Who, like a child, dreading to be observed
By awful Dis, threw little glances down
Toward them, and understood them with
her eyes.
Perpetual dolour had as yet but drooped
The corners of her mouth; and in her hand
She held a bloom that had on earth a name.
Quickly she whispered: "Come, my
Hermes, Come!
'Tis time to fetch me! Ah, through all
my veins
The sharpness of the spring returns: I hear
The stalk revive with sap, and the first
drops
On green illumined grass; now over me
The blades are growing fast; I cannot rest.
He comes, he comes! Yet with how slow
a step,

Who used to run along a sunny gust.

Who used to run along a sunny gust!
And O a withered wreath! no roses now
Dewy from paradise. Surely not his
Those earnest eyes, that ragged hair; his face
Was glad and cold. This is no god at all,
Only some grieving human shade, with hands
Unsightly, and the eager Furies wheel
Over him!" Slowly to her side her arms
Had fallen; Christ with grave eyes looks on her.
Her young mouth trembled fast, and from her hand
With serious face she let the earthly flower
Drop down; then, stretching out her arms, she said:
"O all fresh out of beautiful sunlight!

Thine eyes are still too dazed to see us
clear.
Was it not difficult to come away
Straight from the greenness to the dimness? Now
It is the time of tender, opening things.
Above my head the fields murmur and
wave,
And breezes are just moving the clear heat.
O the mid-noon is trembling on the corn,
On cattle calm, and trees in perfect sleep.
And hast thou empty come? Hast thou
not brought
Even a blossom with the noise of rain
And smell of earth about it, that we all
Might gather round and whisper over it?
At one wet blossom all the dead would feel!
O thou beginning to glide here a shadow,

It is the time of tender, opening things.

Soon shalt thou know how much it seems
to us,
In miserable dim magnificence,
To feel the snowdrop growing over us!
That barren crown! but now it was a
wreath.
These gusts of Hell have blown it into
thorn!
If thou canst bear it yet, O speak to me
Of the blue noon, of breezes and of rivers!"

A wonderful stillness stopped her; like to
trees
Motionless in an ecstasy of rain,
So the tall dead stood drooping around
Christ,
Under the falling peace intensely still;
And some in slow delight their faces raised

Upwards; but soon, like leaves, duly released,
Tormented phantoms, ancient injured shades,
Sighing began downward to drift and glide
Toward him, and unintelligibly healed
Lingered, with closing eyes and parting lips.
Agamemnon bowed over, and from his wheel
Ixion staggered to his feet all blind.
Over the head of Jesus the whole sky
Of pain began to drive: old punishments
Diswreathing drooped, and legendary dooms
Dispersing hung, and lurid history streamed.
But he against that flying sky remained
Placid with power; in silence stood the dead,
Gazing; only was heard that river steal,

Over the head of Jesus the whole sky
Of pain began to drive.

In silence stood the Dead
Gazing, only was heard that River steal
The listless ripple of Oblivion.

The listless ripple of Oblivion.
Then an Athenian ghost stood out and spoke.
"I fear to speak to thee, while these my eyes
Behold our great life interrupted pause.
That was our sky, that passes; and I miss
The busy sound of water, and of stone;
And sorrows that we thought perpetual
I see suspended, and amid them thee
Gentle, and all injured. Art thou a god
Easily closing all these open eyes,
And hast not spoken word? Thou hast not played
Monotonously as rain, inducing sleep:
Thou comest without lute, yet hast thou power
To charm the fixed melancholy of spirits?

Art thou a god? Then guide us to the air,
To trees and rivers, that peculiar light
Which even now is squandered on the beasts.
Canst thou not make the primrose venture up
Or bring the gentlest shower? O pity us;
For I would ask of thee only to look
Upon the wonderful sunlight, and to smell
Earth in the rain. Is not the labourer,
Returning heavy through the August sheaves
Against the setting sun, who gladly smells
His supper from the opening door, is he
Not happier than these melancholy kings?
How good it is to live, even at the worst!
God was so lavish to us once, but here
He hath repented, jealous of his beams.
Just as a widower, that dreaming holds

Not happier than these melancholy kings?

His dead wife in his arms, not wondering,
So natural it appears; then starting up
With trivial words, or even with a jest,
Realises all the uncoloured dawn,
And near his head the young bird in the leaves
Stirring; not less, not otherwise do we
Want in this colourless country the warm earth.
Yet how shall we in thy tormented face
Believe? Thou comest from the glistening sun
As out of some great battle, nor hast thou
The beautiful ease of the untroubled gods.
Most strong are they, for they are joyous cold.
Thou art not happy! We can trust thee not.

How wilt thou lead with feet already
pierced?
And if we ask thy hand, see, it is torn!"

But when he had spoken, Christ no answer
made.
Upon his hands in uncouth gratitude
Great prisoners muttering fawned: behind
them stood
Dreadful suspended business, and vast life
Pausing, dismantled piers, and naked frames.
And further, shapes from obscure troubles
loosed,
Like mist descended: on the horizon last,
The piled tremendous firmament collapsed,
With dazzling pains, and solemn sorrows
white.

As out of some great battle.

Then stole a woman up to him, and said:
"Although I know thee not, yet can I tell
That only a great love hath brought thee hither.
Didst thou so ail in brightness, and couldst not rest
For thinking of some woman? Was thy bed
So empty, cold thy hearth, and aimless glides
Thy wife amidst us? Whom then dost thou seek?
For see, we are so changed: thou wouldst not know
The busy form that moved about thy fire.
She has no occupation, and no care,
No little tasks. O we had pleasant homes.
And often we remember husbands dear,
That were most kind, and wonder after them.

My little children! Who sings to them
now?
Return then to the earth! Thou canst not
fetch
Thy drooping listless woman to the air.
Thou'lt have no comfort out of her at all.
Yet say, perhaps thou hast but lately
died,
And wanderest here unburied? Restless
seem
Those eyes; ah, on thy body thou dost feel
The bird settling? Hath no friend covered
up
Thy limbs, or do they fall with falling
waves?"
But one broke in on her with eager words.
"See how we live along exhausted streams,
Eluding forests, and dispersing hills;

Dreadful suspended business, and vast life
Pausing, dismantled piers, and naked frames.
And further, shapes from obscure troubles loosed,
Like mist descended.

O but I gloried and drank and wept and laughed!
Give me again great life! To dare, to enjoy,
To explore, never to tire, to be alive,
And full of blood, and young, to risk, to love!
The bright glory of after-battle wine,
The flushed recounting faces, the stern hum
Of burnished armies, thrill of unknown seas!"
As he was speaking, slowly all the dead
The melancholy attraction of Jesus felt;
And millions, like a sea, wave upon wave,
Heaved dreaming to that moonlight face, or ran
In wonderful long ripples, sorrow-charmed.
Toward him in faded purple, pacing came
Dead emperors, and sad unflattered kings;

Unlucky captains listless armies led;
Poets with music frozen on their lips,
Toward the pale Brilliance sighed; until at last
Antiquity, like evening gathering,
With mild and starry faces, gradually
Had stolen up. Glimmering all the dead
Looked upon Jesus; as they stood, some thought
Spread from the furthest edges like a breeze,
Till like a leafy forest, the huge host
Whispered together, bending all one way
Toward him; and then ensued a stillness deep.
But suddenly the form of Jesus stirred;
And all the dead stirred with him suddenly.
He shuddered with a rapture; and from his eyes

They felt returning agonies of hope.
As men, flame-wrapped, hither and thither
run,
To rid them, or fall headlong to the ground;
The dead, caught in intolerable hope,
Hither and thither burning rushed, or fell
Imploring him to leave them cold; but
Christ
Came through them: leading irresistibly
Not western spirits alone: but all that world
Was up! and after him in passion swept
Dead Asia, murmuring, and the buried
North!

But in his path a lonely spirit stood;
A Roman, he who from a greater Greek
Borrowed as beautifully as the moon

The fire of the sun: fresh come he was, and still
Deaf with the sound of Rome: forward he came
Softly; a human tear had not yet dried.
"Whither," he said, "O whither dost thou lead
In such a calm all these embattled dead?
Almost I could begin to sing again,
To see these nations burning run through Hell,
Magnificently anguished, by the grave
Untired; and this last March against the Powers.
Who would more gladly follow thee than I?
But over me the human trouble comes.
Dear gladiator pitted against Fate,
I fear for thee: around thee is the scent

To see these nations burning run through Hell,
Magnificently anguished, by the grave
Untired; and this last March against the Powers.

Of over-beautiful, quick-fading things,
The pang, the gap, the briefness, all the dew,
Tremble, and suddenness of earth: I must
Remember young men dead in their hot bloom,
The sweetness of the world edged like a sword,
The melancholy knocking of those waves,
The deep unhappiness of winds, the light
That comes on things we never more shall see.
Yet I am thrilled: thou seemest like the bourne
Of all our music, of the hinting night,
Of souls under the moonlight opening."
Now after speaking, he bowed down his head,

Faltered, and shed wet tears in the vain place.
And Christ half turned, and with grave, open eyes,
Looked on him: but behind there was a sound
Of vast impatience, and the murmurous chafe
Of captains sick for war; and poets shone
All dreaming bright, and fiery prophets, seized
With gladness, boded splendid things; and scarred
Heroes, as desperate men, that see no path,
Yet follow a riddled memorable flag,
Pressed close upon that leader world-engraved.
But he began to pace with slower step,

With wandering gaze, still hesitating more;
Then stayed, and on his last foot strongly leaned.

Faintly the air bore to him blood he knew,
His gentle eyes hither and thither roved.
The Furies rose ejaculating fast,
And circled nearer o'er the limitless dead,
Who paused, all whispering: before them hung
Still unredeemed Prometheus from his crag;
His limbs impaled: then stood the Son of Man,
And seemed almost about to speak; the dead
In silence upward gazed. The Titan's face
Through passing storms leaps out in dazzling pain

Momently on them, and his tone returns
Fitfully through the gusting hurricane.
"Stay, mighty dreamer, though thou comest on
Attracting all the dead, to thy deep charm
Resigned and bright; yet stay, and look on me!
Do I not trouble thee? Dost thou not swerve
Smelling my kindred blood on the great track?
Full in thy path I menace. After me
Canst thou go on?" The storm carried his voice
From them, and veiled with rùshing hail his face.
Then many unbound heroes toward him ran,

The storm carried his voice
And from them veiled with rushing hail his face.

Before them hung
Still unredeemed Prometheus from his crag.

Going with great dumb gestures between him
And Christ; and in their leader's face looked up
Beseeching him their brother to release;
Then they refrained, all motionless; and now
The Titan bowed, coming upon them, and seemed
Falling to carry with him all the crag
Down on them: over the dead host he cried:
"Lo all these ancient prisoners released!
Did I not feel them everywhere come down
Easily from immortal torment? yet
I, I alone, while all came down from woe,
Still striving, could not wrench away these limbs.

O Christ, canst thou a nail move from these feet,
Thou who art standing in such love of me?
Thy hands are too like mine to undo these bonds,
Brother, although the dead world follow thee,
Deep-fascinated: love hath marred us both,
And one yearning, as wide as is the world.
O how thy power leaves thee at this cross!
Prepare thee for the anguish! Thou shalt know
Trouble so exquisite, that from his wheel
Happy Ixion shall spare tears for thee;
And thou shalt envy me my shadowy crag
And softly-feeding vulture. Thou shalt stand
Gazing for ever on the earth, and watch

How fast thy words incarnadine the world!
That I know all things is my torment; nothing,
That ever shall befall, to me is new:
Already I have suffered it far-off;
And on the mind the poor event appears
The pale reflexion of some ancient pang.
Yet I foresee dim comfort, and discern
A bleak magnificence of endless hope.
It seems that even thy woe shall have an end.
It comes upon thee! O prepare thee; ah,
That wailing, those young cries, this smouldering smell!
I see the dreadful look of men unborn.
What hast thou said, that all the air is blood?"

HE cried with nostrils shuddering fast; and Christ
Moved to unbind him; but with arm outstretched
Suddenly stood. A scene unrolling stayed
Him who had easily released the dead.
He knew that for a time the great advance
He must delay, postponing our desire.
The earth again he sees, and all mankind
Half in the shining sun upright, and half
Reposing in the shadow; deserts and towns,
And cloudy mountains and the trembling sea,
And all the deeds done; and the spoken words

Half in the shining sun upright and half
Reposing in the shadow.

Distinct he hears: the human history
Before his eyes defiles in bright sunbeams,
An endless host parading past; whom he,
Their leader mild, remorsefully reviewed,
And had no joy in them, although aloud
They cried his name, and with fierce faces glad
Looked up to him for praise, all murmuring proud,
And bloody trophies toward him flourished and waved:
But as he stood, gazing, from time to time
He seemed to swerve, as though his hand grew red,
Or move, as though to interrupt some sight.
Now when the dead saw that he must not stir,

Absorbed, with wonder gathering in his eyes,
They came about him, touching him, and some
Reminded him, and looked into his face.
Others in patience laid them down, or fell
To calling him sweet earthly names: at last
Waiting the signal that he could not give,
Wanting the one word that he might not speak,
Seeing he stirred not once, they wandered off,
And gathering into groups, yet spoke of him;
Then to despair slowly dispersed, as men
Return with morning to the accustomed task.
And as without some theatre, so friend

Then to despair slowly dispersed, as men
Return with morning to the accustomed task.

The Vault closed back.

Waited for friend, and speaking of that
scene,
Into the ancient sorrow walked away.
Yet many could not, after such a sight,
At once retire, but must from time to time
Linger with undetermining bright eyes.
Now at each parting way some said fare-
well,
And each man took his penance up, per-
haps
Less easily from such an interval:
The vault closed back, woe upon woe, the
wheel
Revolved, the stone rebounded; for that
time
Hades her interrupted life resumed.

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